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**ВОПРОС О НАРУШЕНИИ ПРАВ ЧЕЛОВЕКА И ОСНОВНЫХ СВОБОД
В ЛЮБОЙ ЧАСТИ МИРА**

**Вербальная нота Постоянного представительства Кубы при Отделении
Организации Объединенных Наций в Женеве от 14 марта 2005 года в адрес
Управления Верховного комиссара Организации Объединенных Наций
по правам человека**

Постоянное представительство Кубы при Отделении Организации Объединенных Наций и международных организациях в Швейцарии свидетельствует свое высокое уважение Управлению Верховного комиссара Организации Объединенных Наций по правам человека, секретариат Комиссии по правам человека, и имеет честь препроводить в приложении на английском, испанском и французском языках документ, озаглавленный "Куба и права человека" (часть II), который касается манипулирования работой Комиссии по правам человека со стороны правительства Соединенных Штатов как инструмента его политики враждебности и агрессии против Кубы.

Документ демонстрирует позицию сотрудничества, которой традиционно придерживается Куба по отношению ко всем механизмам недискриминационного характера в области прав человека.

Настоящим Постоянное представительство Кубы просит, чтобы текст указанного документа^{*} был распространен в качестве официального документа шестьдесят первой сессии Комиссии по правам человека по пункту 9 его повестки дня. Кроме того, оно просит распространить этот документ среди всех специальных процедур Комиссии по правам человека и разместить его для ознакомления заинтересованных лиц на сайте, созданном Управлением Верховного комиссара для шестьдесят первой сессии Комиссии.

Постоянное представительство Кубы также сообщает, что в ближайшие дни оно предполагает представить Управлению остальные четыре части документа "Куба и права человека" и просить об их таком же распространении.

^{*} Приложение воспроизводится в полученном виде только на английском, испанском и французском языках.

CUBA AND HUMAN RIGHTS

2 • •

**ANTI CUBAN MANOEUVRES IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS SPHERE:
INVENTING A SPURIOUS PRETEXT TO JUSTIFY THE PERPETUATION
OF THE UNITED STATES' POLICY OF HOSTILITY, BLOCKADE AND
AGGRESSION TOWARDS THE CUBAN PEOPLE.**

CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS	4
CHAPTER 1: IN SPITE OF THE DISAPPROVAL OF THE WORLD'S PEOPLES AND MANY GOVERNMENTS, THE UNITED STATES, AS PART OF ITS ANTICUBAN POLICY, REPEATEDLY MANIPULATES THE WORK OF THE COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS.	6
The inability of the UN's human rights machinery to remedy large-scale, flagrant human rights violations when the violators are citizens of the superpower or of its main allies. The impunity of the powerful.	24
APPENDIX: Tables with country-specific resolutions adopted by the Commission on Human Rights in the period between 1995 and 2004 having to do with the agenda items: "Situations of Persistent Violations of Human Rights And Fundamental Liberties In Any Part Of The World" (Item 9) and Advice And Technical Cooperation Services In Human Rights Matters" (Item 19)	28
CHAPTER 3: IN SPITE OF THE UNFAIR ANTICUBAN MANOEUVRE IMPOSED ON THE CHR, CUBA CONTINUES TO HONOUR ITS COMMITMENT TO COOPERATE WITH ALL NON-DISCRIMINATORY MECHANISMS IN HUMAN RIGHTS MATTERS.	29

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FIRST PART. - THE REDOUBLING OF THE GEORGE W. BUSH ADMINISTRATION'S HOSTILE POLICIES AND AGGRESSION TOWARDS THE CUBAN PEOPLE: A SERIOUS THREAT TO THE CUBAN PEOPLE'S HUMAN RIGHTS

Chapter 1: The US government's hostility and aggression towards Cuba have reached dimensions unprecedented in the relationship between two states that are not at war.

Chapter 2: A new imperialist programme for subjugating the Cuban nation and recolonising the country.

Chapter 3: "Good" terrorists, "bad" terrorists?

Chapter 4: The human rights of 5 young Cuban anti-terrorist activists, wrongly imprisoned in the United States, and those of their families, are grossly violated for spurious political motivations.

Chapter 5: The United States steps up the recruitment, financing and use of mercenaries in its attempts to undermine the right to self-determination of the Cuban people.

Chapter 6: US media attacks on Cuba.

SECOND PART. - ANTI CUBAN MANOEUVRES IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS SPHERE: INVENTING A SPURIOUS PRETEXT TO JUSTIFY THE PERPETUATION OF THE UNITED STATES' POLICY OF HOSTILITY, BLOCKADE AND AGGRESSION TOWARDS THE CUBAN PEOPLE.

Chapter 1: In spite of the disapproval of the world's peoples and many governments, the United States, as part of its anti-Cuban policy, repeatedly manipulates the work of the commission on human rights.

Chapter 2: The intergovernmental processes of the United Nations human rights machinery have been hijacked by the United States and its close allies to use as tools for applying pressure to impose their policies of world domination.

Chapter 3: In spite of the unfair anti-Cuban manoeuvre imposed on the CHR, Cuba continues to honour its commitment to cooperate with all non-discriminatory mechanisms in the human rights field.

THIRD PART. - CUBA FACES UP TO ADVERSITY AND EXTERNAL CHALLENGES AND CONTINUES TO BUILD A MORE DEMOCRATIC, FAIR, PARTICIPATIVE, EQUAL SOCIETY BASED ON SOLIDARITY.

Chapter 1: The democratic system sovereignly chosen by the Cuban people.

Chapter 2: Guarantees provided by Cuban domestic civil and political rights legislation.

Chapter 3: A year when much was achieved, in spite of adversity and challenges.

Chapter 4: Education: Revolution within the Revolution. Education, culture and sport for all Cubans.

Chapter 5: An ever more efficient, accessible health system adapted to the needs of every Cuban man, woman and child.

Chapter 6: Making prisons into real centres for re-education and human improvement.

Chapter 7: Full employment and guaranteed social assistance and security for all.

FOURTH PART. - US BLOCKADE ON CUBA: GROSS AND SYSTEMATIC VIOLATION OF THE CUBAN PEOPLE'S HUMAN RIGHTS.

Chapter 1: New measures which step up the genocidal economic, trade and financial blockade on the Cuban people.

Chapter 2: Political manipulation on bilateral immigration relations at the hands of successive US administrations. President Bush attacks Cuban families and disallows already scarce academic, cultural and educational exchange between the US and Cuban peoples.

FIFTH PART. - GUANTÁNAMO: A MORAL AND LEGAL BLACK HOLE

Chapter 1: A veritable "legal and moral black hole" in the area illegally occupied by the Guantanamo US Naval Base.

CHAPTER 1: IN SPITE OF THE DISAPPROVAL OF THE WORLD'S PEOPLES AND MANY GOVERNMENTS, THE UNITED STATES, AS PART OF ITS ANTI-CUBAN POLICY, REPEATEDLY MANIPULATES THE WORK OF THE COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS.

In the 1980s, ultra right-wing conservative forces rose to power in the United States. The Santa Fe Document, which was used as an electoral platform and as policy document by the forces that backed then President Ronald Reagan, said in reference to Cuba: "A vigorously and fairly applied programme of human rights as the "miraculous" weapon wielded by the United States in confronting the Soviet Union and its satellites and surrogates. Curiously, the current administration¹ (...) has made no serious attempt to apply his human rights doctrine to Castro's Cuba (...)"

In the context of its new anti-Cuban strategy, the Reagan administration instructed infamous Cuban-American terrorists, directed and financed by the CIA to change their cover and "become", supposedly, groups in favour of peaceful opposition and the defence of human rights. Inside Cuba, various small subversive groups of this kind were created with official US funding which recruited people who were previously involved in violent counterrevolutionary activities and even some former officials and policemen from Fulgencio Batista's dictatorship. Recruitment was focussed especially on members of the lumpen-proletariat, opportunists, those who felt hard-done-by and the usual annexationists.

In 1985 and 1986 the first failed attempts to have Cuba condemned over its human rights record were made in the Third Commission of the United Nations General Assembly.

The first attempt to achieve something similar in the Commission on Human Rights took place in 1987 when the United States proposed a draft resolution that was unsuccessful when a no-action motion was passed.

In 1988 the United States proposed another draft resolution aimed at singling Cuba out for criticism. This was also unsuccessful because of the positive reception given to the Cuban initiative to invite a mission made up of the Commission's president and five member state representatives to visit Cuba.

Neither was the United States able to achieve its objective of having Cuba condemned by the Commission in 1989. Several amendments proposed by US diplomats to the draft resolution submitted to the Commission were defeated. The text adopted simply took note of the report drawn up by the mission that visited Cuba and invited the Cuban government to work on implementing its recommendations.

On consolidating itself as the only superpower, after the Soviet Union disintegrated and socialism in Eastern Europe disappeared, in 1990 the United States managed, for the first time, to have a draft resolution condemning Cuba passed in the Commission on Human Rights.

Cuba refused to countenance any kind of cooperation with such an abomination, which was malformed from its very conception, motivated by illegitimate interests and the result of brutal pressure and blackmail.

The Cuban people's principled position, its dignified steadfastness in the face of lies and slander gradually won the respect and support of Commission members and when 1998 arrived, the draft anti-Cuban resolution proposed by the United States was clearly defeated by a vote of 16 in favour and 19 against.

After this unexpected defeat, the United States government buckled down to the task of creating a new image for its anti-Cuban manoeuvring in the CHR. Using its traditional methods, it convinced the government of the day in the Czech Republic, a country which at the time needed the United States' support for its application to join NATO, to become the public face of the draft resolution

¹ This was a reference to President Carter

against Cuba in the Commission. Taking on such a degrading task presented no difficulty to the team of opportunists headed by former President Havel; over the years they had learned to obediently carry out Washington's orders and enjoy its money.

Armed with this new design and applying its usual pressure and blackmail to the fullest, the United States managed to get the anti-Cuban resolution passed from 1999 to 2001 but always with a tiny majority of between one and three votes.

By the end of 2001 it was obvious that this way of working was entering a crisis. The superpower realised that it needed to "spruce up" the image of its anti-Cuban exercise, something that became a strategic necessity after its humiliating exclusion from membership of the Commission as a result of elections by secret ballot held in the Social and Economic Commission.

So Bush administration top officials stepped up their efforts to have one or two Latin American countries propose the anti-Cuban resolution in the Commission's 58th session in 2002.

The intensity of the pressure exercised by top US officials and the increasing vulnerability and dependence of several Latin American governments—which had very low levels of popular support—on the US helped them to achieve their aim. So President Jorge Batlle of Uruguay was the marionette and gave a public performance of the anti-Cuban script that reflected nothing but the opinions of the Miami terrorist mafia and was written, down to the commas and full stops, in Washington.

In contrast with the submissive position of a few Latin American governments, the peoples in the region unanimously condemned this anti-Cuban manoeuvre. Not only did they take to the streets to protest in several capital cities but in countries like Argentina, Guatemala, Mexico and Peru parliament demanded that the government refuse to follow this line and adopt an independent, dignified position in Geneva.

All the anti-Cuban text forced through the Commission's 58th period of sessions in 2002 did—those who touted it unsuccessfully attempted to present it as a "new" product with "constructive" approach—was to re-establish an unfair monitoring mechanism of a non-existent human rights "situation" in Cuba. The worst thing about this case was the decision, which exacerbated the anti-Cuban manipulation conceived by Washington in order to satisfy its lust for domination, to involve none other than the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in this dirty business.

Representatives of the Cuban-American terrorist mob played an important role in supporting the United States government's anti-Cuban actions. Making good use of the fact that it has representatives in the U.S. Congress, it became directly involved in the pressure and blackmail exerted on several governments. Similarly, it undertook public diplomacy schemes whose aim was to sell the idea that behind the Bush administration's actions was a call for action made by what they call "the Cuban exile community".

On 18 September 2002 eleven congress people on the Miami terrorist mob's payroll headed by Ileana Ros-Lehtinen and Lincoln Díaz-Balart sent a letter to the then United Nations High Commissioner urging him to get personally involved in the actions against Cuba.

On 13 December of that same year, Ros-Lehtinen sent another letter to the high commissioner ordering him to ask Cuba to release several mercenaries from jail; these were people who had been legitimately imprisoned in Cuba for crimes committed on the orders of the United States government.

At the beginning of January 2003 the undersecretary of state for Political Affairs, Marc Grossman, sent a message to the high commissioner to remind him that he still had not appointed his personal representative for Cuba, adding that the United States thought it extremely important that this be done as soon as possible.

Given the reluctance of the Uruguayan government to play the leading role again in the anti-Cuban libretto written in Washington—this was because of the high political price this had cost it in the

eyes of the Uruguayan people—the superpower had to exert further pressure on vulnerable Latin American governments, in order to find a new “star”.

Mrs Poblete, assistant to the anti-Cuban congressperson Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, went to Geneva at the beginning of January 2003 and had separate meetings with some Latin American diplomatic representatives to explore what their feelings were on the anti-Cuban manoeuvre orchestrated by the United States, to gauge which in specific areas and subjects each one was most vulnerable and to propose concrete recommendations to boost the effectiveness of the blackmail and conditions which would be worked out later by both the US congress and administration.

At the end of that same month, Undersecretary of State for Global Affairs Paula Dobriansky went to several Latin American countries where she met with presidents and foreign ministers, her goal being to coerce them into giving a commitment to propose the anti-Cuban motion at the 59th Commission on Human Rights.

Similarly, US ambassadors in various capital cities, as is traditional, undertook important tasks in support of the anti-Cuban manoeuvre. They stepped up their anti-Cuban misinformation and manipulative propaganda campaigns, distributing brochures cooked up by the State Department full of “up-dated” lies and distorted “facts”. In addition, with varying degrees of subtlety and transparency—depending on how dependent the government in question is on the United States—they demanded support for what the superpower call its priorities in the Commission on Human Rights and reminded them of the bounties that could stem from a good bilateral relation with the hegemonic power.

Showing its usual cynicism and opportunism, President George Bush’s administration unsuccessfully tried to use the fact that Peru was then coordinating the Rio Group, one of the fora for political rapprochement for Latin American and Caribbean countries, to try to oblige them to propose the anti-Cuban draft resolution at the 59th Commission on Human Rights.

After the failure of his attempts to persuade a broader political spectrum to join him in his services to the empire, Peru’s President Toledo, with the support of the obedient Costa Rican government and then President Batlle of Uruguay, had to shoulder direct responsibility for publicly sponsoring the anti-Cuban draft resolution in the 59th Commission on Human Rights.

As the opening of the Commission’s period of session drew closer, so the United States’ pressures grew stronger. In its anti-Cuban machinations, Washington had the unconditional support of governments which were its allies/clients, particularly that of then President of Spain, José Maria Aznar, a Fascist booted out of office by the Spanish people because of his servility to Bush and because of the way he continually manipulated and distorted the truth.

To ensure it obtained the votes needed to push its anti-Cuban resolution through the Commission, the Bush administration paid no heed to legal or ethical constraints. Promise of financial aid and other benefits for those who delivered their vote rang out from Washington. Nevertheless, the most common practice was not offering something new; what predominated were direct or veiled threats to block loans and grants from international financial institutions which the United States controls, such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank, to withdraw bilateral trade and immigration concessions and even to make the United States’ treatment of political matters of vital importance to the countries being blackmailed depend on how they voted.

A few days before the vote, the United States markedly increased its efforts to force a change to the text of the anti-Cuban resolution. They wanted to include an explicit condemnation of the fair prison sentences given to the mercenaries working on behalf of its unilateral blockade and aggression policy.

On 18 March 2003 Richard Boucher, spokesperson for the State Department made a statement calling on the Commission to condemn, in the strongest possible terms, the arrest of its mercenaries in Cuba.

Once again the superpower decided to work behind the scenes. But this time it had to go up against more complex obstacles. Some Latin American governments, which had already committed themselves to either sponsoring or supporting the anti-Cuban resolution, decided not to support yet another US manoeuvre against Cuba. They had been brought to bay by the fact public opinion in their countries was against the war in Iraq and by their fear of popular uprisings if they gave their backing to a new escalation of propaganda which could be used by the superpower as a pretext for a military attack on the Cuban people.

The humiliating mission of proposing the amendment fell to Costa Rica, an amendment cooked up by the United States to create the conditions, which would make it more feasible to attack the Cuban people and thus wipe the Cuban Revolution off the map. The only government in Latin American or the Third World that voted for this amendment was the Costa Rican government. Need we say more?

On April 16 Cuba officially tabled two amendments to the anti-Cuban resolution, E/CN.4/L.77. These demand an immediate end to the illegal, unilateral blockade on Cuba and asked the high commissioner to make an evaluation of effects on the Cuban people of terrorist acts against Cuba launched from within US territory.

There was a long procedural debate on these amendments, which delayed the discussion and vote on the anti-Cuban resolution by 24 hours. During this debate the United States' authorship of the amendment presented by Costa Rica was completely unmasked and so the superpower's ambassador in Geneva had no alternative but to declare that his delegation "would support anything against Cuba".

In spite of the tremendous pressure brought to bear by the United States, the amendment that tried to condemn Cuba was defeated in the Commission when it was rejected by an overwhelming majority of countries. Only 15 countries voted for the amendment while 31, more than twice as many, voted against.

This result dealt a heavy blow to Washington and to the Cuban-born, annexationist terrorist mob. This is the same mob which, when the unilateral attack by the US empire on Iraq began, shouted, "Iraq now, Cuba next", —an out-and-out incitement to aggression— in the only public demonstration in support of this illegal war in any city in the world. It just had to be Miami.

The Cuban amendment condemning the US blockade as a serious human rights violation did not pass. The same group of European and Latin American governments which cynically and hypocritically claims to be worried about a non-existent human rights situation in Cuba —voting in favour of and cosponsoring the anti-Cuban resolution in Geneva— showed that they didn't have the required dignity or respect for justice to condemn the genocidal blockade imposed by the United States on the Cuban people in violation of its basic human rights, including the right to life itself.

The governments that are accomplices of and subordinate to the Empire in its anti-Cuban manoeuvre at the Commission on Human Rights were shown to be naked in their new clothes of double moral standards, hypocrisy and submission to Washington and to its hopes of crushing the Cuban nation.

After the amendments failed to pass, the anti-Cuban draft resolution E/CN.4/L.2 was voted on and passed by a narrow margin of four votes (24 in favour, 20 against and 9 abstentions). This was in spite of the fact that the United States had had an extra 24 hours for its brutal pressure to do its work.

The anti-Cuban resolution (E/CN.4/RES/2003/13), although it did not meet all expectations, ensured that the United States government would be able to continue with its anti-Cuban machinations in the Commission's work. As well as keeping the subject on the Commission's agenda, it managed to consolidate the mechanism of the high commissioner's so-called personal representative thus providing its anti-Cuban crusade with the services of an official who would list and repeat the lies

cooked up in Washington and Miami and, why not say so, those invented with Uncle Sam's money in other places like Prague and Warsaw.

Looking ahead to the Commission's 60th session, held in 2004, the United States, from quite early on, availed itself of every opportunity to put pressure on various governments in the interests of its anti-Cuban machinations. Among other things, this included visits by various undersecretaries of state, especially the State Department's Under Secretary of State for Global Affairs Paula Dobriansky, to Latin American and Eastern European capitals. Two delegations of congress people were also dispatched to these latitudes on the same mission. The Cuban-born mobster, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, Republican congressperson for Florida was a member of one of the delegations. These aforementioned efforts were supplemented by several tours of and visits to Latin American countries by the former White House Special Ambassador for Latin America, the protector of terrorists and staunch anti-Cuban, Otto Reich and by Jesse Helm's former collaborator, also an anti-Cuban, Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs Roger Noriega.

Once this first phase of political and diplomatic pressures was completed, the politicians in Washington convinced themselves that the only countries which could be coerced to publicly propose the anti-Cuban motion in the 60th CHR were one or more of those in Central America or Eastern and Central Europe. Although they found both options equally unattractive in terms of image — quite a few Central American and Eastern and Central European governments are perceived by world public opinion to be clients of the Empire— they opted for Central America.

Notwithstanding anything that could be said about them, Central American governments have the comparative advantage of belonging to the Latin American family; thus if one or more Central American governments takes a public stance against Cuba in Geneva, this would allow the United States' powerful disinformation machine to present its anti-Cuban manoeuvring as a concern that has arisen in the heart of Cuba's own region.

The United States then buckled down to the task of trying to coerce Central American governments as a group to public sponsor the anti-Cuban motion in the 60th CHR. However, in addition to the principled rejection of more than one government —they knew that such an escalation in anti-Cuban actions would be met with enormous public repudiation and would seriously affect bilateral relations with Cuba— Washington came up against a hurdle that it was unable to surmount, its pressure and blackmail notwithstanding.

The United States government, after the defeat at the 59th CHR of the amendment proposed by Costa Rica on its orders, needed to be sure that a critical reference to Cuba for legally jailing several dozen mercenaries on the payroll of United States Interests Section in Havana was included in the very first and all other versions of the anti-Cuban resolution to be submitted to the 60th CHR. Some Central American governments refused to publicly co-submit an anti-Cuban motion if it were so amended.

Faced with this state of affairs, Washington abandoned the strategy of having the sub-region as a whole propose the anti-Cuban resolution and concentrated its pressure on the most vulnerable and dependent Central American governments. The strategy was to be that of initially sacrificing the public prestige and credibility of one government —which would be condemned to play the role of principal author— with other co-sponsors joining one by one as they succumbed to the threat of the superpower's big stick.

The government that played the sad role of being the main sponsor the anti-Cuban motion in the 60th CHR will be identified below. As it is only logical to conclude, this task fell to a government with one of the worst human rights records in the hemisphere. Just a hint; it is a government that has not even been able to put an end to the impunity given to the systematic practice of extrajudicial executions of dozens of its children.

A meeting of Congress's International Relations Committee was held in March to give backing to the pressure being applied by the White House and the State Department; it had been summoned by the Cuban-born mob's representative in the US Congress, Ileana Ros Lehtinen. Diplomats from

several Latin American countries were invited to the meeting; they had to listen to Ros-Lehtinen's voice telling them what were the aims that had to be accomplished by the anti-Cuban resolution over there in Geneva. The mob moll turned Congressperson said clearly that one or two paragraphs condemning Cuba more explicitly had to be added to the text of the resolution passed the previous year.

The empire's client regime installed in Prague once again played its role as peddler in the lucrative business of the Cuban counterrevolution. Politicos and diplomats of the puppet Czech Republic ran around several world capitals like really bad actors—making good use of the money bounteously dispensed by the Superpower—rehashing the anti-Cuban script drafted in Washington with the help of some Miami residents. It must be kept in mind that former President Havel had had the great honour of having been paid homage in that Florida city by the highest representatives of the terrorist anti-Cuban mob. In February and March, when he visited some Latin American and African countries, Deputy Foreign Minister Vosalik, one of the people hired for this job, was involved in various machinations against the Cuban Revolution.

Mindful of the accuracy and effectiveness of denunciations made by Cuba, the United States fine tuned its efforts and demanded complete secrecy from its accomplices during the preparations for its anti-Cuban manoeuvres in Geneva. It was asking for the impossible: the creation of an illusion that the anti-Cuban resolution in the Commission on Human Rights was the outcome of genuine concern on the part of the international community.

Reality once again dealt Washington a hard blow in the Commission's 60th session. The American authorship of the anti-Cuban resolution was obvious, as never before, they hadn't allowed even a comma of the original to be changed. Never before had US diplomats been so public in applying pressure to obtain the necessary votes and the signatures of the collaborator countries dragged into cosponsoring

In order to guarantee complete compartmentalisation of information about the gestation period of this anti-Cuban monster and to make it easier to twist arms — not even the slightest difference of opinion over the final product was permitted— the text of the anti-Cuban resolution was drafted under the strictest secrecy in Washington.

The Empire's task of naming the public sponsor of the anti-Cuban resolution at the 60th CHR had been made easier by one of its most faithful servants. José Maria Aznar had once again played the role of procurer for Washington in its anti-Cuban manoeuvrings. During the Summit for the Heads of State of Central America and Spain in Madrid, he, on 5 March, made a direct request to Honduran president Ricardo Maduro that his country propose the anti-Cuban motion in Geneva. This was a special favour President Bush had asked him for.²

On 9 March in Washington, Secretary of State Colin Powell directly demanded that the Honduran president accept responsibility for officially registering the resolution censuring Cuba in the 60 CHR. In exchange, Powell promised that the United States would consider Honduras for inclusion among the countries to receive the few crumbs of financial aid it has promised to hand out under what it was calling the Millennium Initiative.

When he returned to Honduras, President Maduro announced this promised US aid but kept secret the condition that went with it: that of giving up the sovereign right to decide what actions the Honduran State would take at the United Nations and worse yet, to play the humiliating part in Geneva of chief accomplice to the attack on the truth and justice that the Cuban people are demanding³.

² Dispatch from Europa Press 31 March and in an interview given by Cuban Foreign Minister Felipe Pérez Roque a Mayra Navarro from Honduran Channel 11 on 13 April 2004. See www.cubaminrex.cu

³ Based on information taken from a Europa Press dispatch dated 31 March 2004

A meeting was held in State Department headquarters on 24 March at which Marc Grossman, undersecretary for political affairs, told diplomats from several countries who had been invited that Honduras would be the “chief sponsor” of the anti-Cuban resolution at the 60th CHR. Grossman’s assistants immediately distributed the English text of the resolution and only then was the Honduran ambassador allowed to speak. Timidly, he merely confirmed announcement that had been made and visibly nervous at having been placed in a humiliating, embarrassing situation, uttered a few stammered, incoherent words and asked for backing for the resolution.

While all of the above was going on behind the scenes, the report of the personal representative, so-called, of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights had been officially distributed.

Mrs Christine Chanet who has, up until now, occupied this spurious post created by virtue of anti-Cuban resolution E/CN.4/2002/18 forced through the 58th session of the CHR submitted her first written report to the 60th CHR.

The document was — and could not have been otherwise, given the information sources used, the pressure applied by the United States and those countries who supported its hostile policies towards the Cuban people, not to mention the unjust reasons that motivated its drafting— yet another example of anti-Cuban libel, devoid of objectivity, which, when it came down to it, simply gave credit to the false allegations made up by those expert liars who work for the CIA, the State Department and the Miami anti-Cuban terrorist mob.

The *soi-disant* personal representative found herself singing the sad anti-Cuban libretto created for her by the United States and its accomplices. In an international system of human rights which is obviously the object of thorough-going political manipulation for the purposes of world domination, any expert who values her or his credibility and impartiality should carefully examine the nature of and circumstances surrounding the responsibility she or he is offered before accepting or acting on it — although it is never too late to reconsider and act honestly.

So anyone who accepts the anti-Cuban mandate created by Commission resolution 2002/18, a mechanism thought up by the Superpower to invent pretexts for continuing with its policy of hostility, genocidal blockade and aggression towards the Cuban people should never, ever expect to be respectfully or considerately treated by Cubans.

The conclusions and recommendations in the *soi-disant* personal representative’s report are exact replicas, photocopies of the demands the hegemonic Superpower made of the Cuban people with the aim of destroying its process of revolutionary transformations and of forcing it back into the servile position of neo-colonial vassalage under which it suffered for more than 50 years after the Island was militarily occupied by the forces of the then nascent US imperialism.

The *soi-disant* personal representative went along with the Bush administration’s and the Miami mob’s henchmen by asking Cuba:

1. That its government interfere with and set aside just decisions taken by courts following due process and existing laws when judging acts classified as serious crimes; that it release and extend de facto impunity to a group of mercenaries paid by the Superpower who acted to the detriment of their own country when accomplishing missions for that Superpower.
2. That it amend laws and constitutional principles voted for in a referendum by an overwhelming majority of the Cuban people who were exercising their right to sovereignty and self-determination.
3. That it allow people from other countries working for the hostile anti-Cuban policy of the US imperial power circles and the Miami mob to enter Cuba on missions financed, partially, by the \$59,000,000 which Washington is assigning to encourage acts aimed at annihilating the Cuban constitutional system.

The Bush administration, once it had resolved the problem of who would dirty their hands by undertaking to publicly sponsor the anti-Cuban resolution at the 61st CHR did not let up on its

manoeuvring for even a second. Its representatives launched themselves into a whirl of anti-Cuban activity the minute the Commission opened its doors in Geneva.

The United States refused to allow any negotiation over the anti-Cuban resolution drafted in Washington and forced the Honduran representatives to hurry up and register it officially with the 60th CHR secretary. It refused to give countries that had become its accomplices either by supporting or cosponsoring the anti-Cuban resolution even the tiniest opportunity to propose even a change to the punctuation in the anti-Cuban text.

Even though it had not consulted them nor taken them into account, the hegemonic Superpower began to push the members of its cohort, one by one, into cosponsoring the resolution censuring Cuba. The usual bunch began to add their names to the list: former colonial powers fallen on hard times and today occupying the sorry position of obedient second class partners: servile and sub-imperialist allies who feed their lust for domination by acting as sub-regional guard dogs for Washington's aggressive policy; some client regimes — in the region the Superpower looks on as its own backyard— which are still in existence against the will of their people and others who simply did not have the courage to stand up to Washington's pressure.

On 2 April 2004, at 6:00 pm Geneva time, the Honduran delegation tabled the anti-Cuban draft resolution. US representatives oversaw every detail of the operation. In order to "share out" and lessen the public humiliation that it had imposed on the Honduran government — a country which had never shown any interest in submitting any kind of draft resolution for the CHR's consideration— Washington promised the authorities in Tegucigalpa that it would obtain the signatures of such independent governments and ones so committed to the cause of human rights as those of Nicaragua, El Salvador, Peru, the Czech Republic and Australia.

Boasting of its long experience in the field and its active role in the search for cosponsors and support notwithstanding, the leading actor decided to continue working from the shadows. Reaching the height of cynicism and cheek, Washington chose to not put its name on the list of those who were responsible for drafting the anti-Cuban resolution.

The text of the resolution, — were it not for the serious threat stemming from the headway made by the motivations behind it— would deserve to become an object lesson for politicians and diplomats interested in developing the art of useless rhetoric and that of using a lot of words to say very little.

Nevertheless, it is important to understand the danger presented by such a subtle trick. The anti-Cuban manoeuvring in the Commission on Human Rights is illegitimate and unacceptable to our people and to anyone in the world who loves truth and reason. This is not only because of the wording of the resolution which is forced down the Commission's throat so as to institutionalise it but more especially because it makes it easier to fabricate a pretext which gives continuity to the unilateral hostile policy of blockade and aggression which successive US administrations have imposed on Cuba for over forty years. This hostility and aggression is now reaching even more dangerous levels when "a regime change" in any country, which does not submit to US imperialism, is now Washington's official policy.

The resolution censuring Cuba forced through the 60th CHR did not have even the tiniest passing reference to the US policy of hostility, blockade and aggression towards the Cuban people which is the only mass, systematic, serious and constant source of violation of the human rights of Cuban men and women. So how could anyone expect that such a document recognise or endorse the Cuban people's right to adopt measures enshrined in law to protect its independence, its self determination and to ensure that the social, economic and political system sovereignty chosen to build a future filled with welfare, social justice and solidarity for all is well defended?

The anti-Cuban resolution was passed by the ridiculous margin of one vote, the votes being 22 in favour and 21 against and 10 abstentions. Such a result was a Pyrrhic victory for the Superpower whose henchmen had applied the strongest most brutal pressure on governments of developing countries. As a corroboration of the growing weakness and bad reputation of the anti Cuban

manoeuvring in Geneva, the resolution received more votes against than ever before and had 2 votes in favour less than in 2003.

Honduras played an unfortunate part. Its representatives, who were definitely coerced into moving a motion of which they could not change a comma made no move in the Commission theatre that was not dictated to them by the US delegation. The latter showed them the benches where they had to collect signatures for co-sponsorship and encouraged them to complete their "mission" by giving them inflated figures of the favourable votes that were supposedly a sure thing after the pressure applied in Washington and other capitals. Of course, Honduras did not itself collect a single vote for "its" resolution.

In order to make sure that the anti-Cuban resolution in Geneva was passed, the United States government delegation was "reinforced" with people who have years of experience in applying hostile anti-Cuban policies and in wielding the big stick against southern governments. One of these was Frank Almaguer, a shady Cuban-born fellow.

Almaguer was Washington's ambassador in Tegucigalpa from 1999 to 2002. Before that, he had been involved in other instances of interference and interventionism in Central America and other Latin American countries, carrying out his missions behind the humanitarian façade of the Peace Corps, so called, and USAID.

Never before had the ties between a US administration and the most reactionary and aggressive elements of the anti-Cuban terrorist mob from Miami been so obvious. And to crown their insolence and their contempt for the Commission, Washington accredited Luis Zúñiga Rey, an infamous Cuban-born terrorist as a member of its delegation to the CHR's 60th session.

Zúñiga Rey was arrested in 1974 and sentenced by the courts when he illegally entered Cuba from the United States carrying arms and explosives. He was part of a CIA operation that was to carry out several terrorist acts. When he was released and returned to the United States, he took charge of the paramilitary wing of the Cuban American National Foundation and was involved in organising and financing bomb attacks on Cuban hotels in Havana and in other terrorist actions against Cuban hospitals.

The special rapporteur's report on the use of mercenaries given at the CHR's 56th session contained information that Zúñiga Rey recruited the Guatemalan citizen Percy Francisco Alvarado Godoy to make a study of areas in Cuba, such as hotels, electricity generating stations and oil refineries that were vulnerable and susceptible to terrorist attacks.

Zúñiga Rey the terrorist took part in the debates in the CHR's 60th session from the benches of none other than the Superpower, which claims to be committed to, and encouraging the fight against terrorism.

The Cuban-born terrorist mob which lives in the United States working in collusion with the Bush administration which gives it shelter and power pulled the threads in its web of influence so it could send US congress people who had been the beneficiaries of its "generous" financial contributions to join in the anti-Cuban farce in Geneva.

Chris Smith, Republican representative for New Jersey, one of the states which gives shelter to groups of Cuban-born terrorists such as Alpha 66 and Commandos L —the other is Florida— wandered through Geneva halls and passages lobbying for support for the anti-Cuban resolution and threatening those who said no with reprisals. Mr. Smith was helped by Mrs Poblete, assistant to Cuban-born congressperson Ileana Ros-Lehtinen who is infamous for her part in Elián González' kidnapping and her active role in trying to have the genocidal blockade on the Cuban people stepped up.

In their attempts to push the anti-Cuban resolution through at any cost, the minions of imperial power resorted to the extremely small-minded threats.

They reminded the Central Americans that they could send back hundreds of thousands of their countries' émigrés who work in the United States and stop them from sending family remittances to their countries of origin.

They threatened some African countries with taking the benefits of the African Growth and Opportunities Act (AGOA) away from them —the AGOA is a US law that allows some African exports privileged access to the US market.

They tried to intimidate other countries from several other regions by sketching out a typical blackmail scenario. They were told that their refusal to vote for the anti-Cuban resolution could make them the object of a resolution of censure. The imperial government even went so far as to promise those who bowed to their anti-Cuban demands that it would use its "good offices" to discourage any attempt to censure that country, fully aware that these censorious manoeuvres in the Commission are always set in motion in the interests of industrialised powers.

Several countries from various regions were asked to vote for the anti-Cuban resolution or at least to abstain and in exchange the United States would not block a loan from the International Monetary Fund where the United States has a de facto veto right.

On 14 April 2004, Assistant Secretary of State Roger Noriega confirmed that the White House had made contact with some Latin American and European countries asking them to support the anti-Cuban resolution. He said that even President Bush himself was getting personally involved by making telephone calls and gave as an example the conversation with President Fox.⁴

The assistant secretary for international organisations in the State Department, Kim Holmes, publicly said that the United States was fighting hard, talking to several countries to get them to support the anti-Cuban resolution.

A State Department spokesperson confirmed that the Secretary of State and other State Department officials had been making phone calls to countries that were members of the Commission to identify the United States' most important interests in the human rights sphere and urging them to vote accordingly.

Sometimes the pressure applied was so outrageous that news of it leaked out. One such case was that of the Dominican Republic when Hipólito Mejía was president. The latter had indicated to Cuban authorities that he would abstain from voting on the anti-Cuban resolution. His commitment remained firm until the evening of 14 April when less than 12 hours remained for the vote in Geneva when a surprised Cuban government learned that the Dominican Republic would join those voting against Cuba.⁵

Hipólito Mejía said publicly in Miami that he had been receiving phone calls from US Assistant Secretary of State Roger Noriega and from the man who was then president Bush's special envoy for the Americas the anti-Cuban Otto Reich pressuring him about the vote on the anti-Cuban resolution in Geneva.

In Latin America in particular there is a clear correlation between the degree of sovereignty, dignity and popularity of a government and the chances that Washington's pressure and blackmail to coerce support or co-sponsorship for the anti-Cuban resolution will be successful.

Those governments in the region which are experiencing corruption and fraud scandals and have very little popular support, those which are extremely dependent on Washington for financial

⁴ Dispatch from the DPA press agency

⁵ Interview given on 20 April 2004 by the honourable Mr Felipe Perez Roque, Minister of Foreign Relations of the Republic of Cuba to "El gobierno de la mañana" programme on Dominican radio station Z-101. See www.Cubaminrex.cu

assistance and for validation of their repression of their discontented popular sectors, those which represent the selfish interests of transnational capital's client oligarchies are those most likely to bend their knee to the anti-Cuban orders of the Superpower and disregard the will of their respective peoples.

The list of servile "statesmen and women" in the region would include people of the "political stature" of former presidents Menem (who became a millionaire thanks to the honest way he performed his exalted task) and Batlle (the former Uruguayan president who ended his term in office with the lowest level of popular support in the history of his country and who gave continued impunity to those who had committed serious human rights violations such as extrajudicial executions, forced disappearances and torture).

If the way the United States behaved in Geneva were really motivated by a desire to protect human rights in Latin America, it would not force its spurious and unjustified anti-Cuban resolution down the Commission's throat. On the contrary, it would submit for the Commission's consideration two draft resolutions against those Latin American governments that co-sponsor and support the anti-Cuban resolution.

And the foregoing is not mere rhetoric. This thesis is based on the reports that the State Department drafts every year on the human rights situation in every country in the world with, of course, the exception of the United States. The State Department's report contains concrete facts and value judgements on the governments that co-sponsor their anti-Cuban manoeuvrings, which far surpass the seriousness of the false allegations about Cuba.

Whereas reports issued in successive years do not include a single reference to grave and flagrant human rights violations in Cuba, they do document tens, even hundreds and thousands of cases of the torture, forced disappearances, extra-judicial executions—even of children—political assassinations of journalists and lawyers, forced evictions, corruption and fraud in governments and courts, malnourishment and illiteracy and complete impunity and hopelessness which victimize the peoples governed by those who join in the attack in Geneva on the dignity of Cuban men and women.

The government of Honduras, following the orders of the Bush administration, agreed to be the public sponsor of the anti-Cuban draft resolution at the 60th CHR, going openly against the will of its people.

Many important Honduran political and artistic figures and intellectuals, non-governmental organizations, friendship associations from various regions of the country and even some of the major newspapers, such as La Prensa, La Tribuna, Tiempo and El Heraldo published correspondence, statements, articles and letters condemning the anti-Cuban decision taken by President Maduro and criticising the way he behaved at the United States' behest.

The correspondence and public declarations condemning the attitude of the Honduran government include ones made by: Cardinal Oscar Rodríguez Maradiaga, the Association of Non-governmental Organisations (ASONOG), the 7th Ordinary National Assembly of the Democratic Unification Party, the Popular Block, the Fraternal Black Honduran Organization (OFRANEH), the Board of Directors of the Coordinating Committee of the Honduran Peasants' Organization and the Civic Council of Peoples and Indigenous Organisations of Honduras (COPINH) in the name of several NGOs, national unions and union branches, student, indigenous and catholic grass roots organisations, etc.

The Committee of Relatives of the Arrested and Disappeared in Honduras (COFADEH) called Honduras' anti-Cuban position in Geneva "unjust, undignified and morally incompetent" and said:

⁶ Honduran and Cuban Peoples, Fraternal Peoples, Compilation of documents relating to the anti-Cuba position of the Honduran government at the Commission on Human Rights. Honduras – Cuba Friendship Association. Printed by Guardabarranco Publishing House, Honduras.

“President Ricardo Maduro’s government is not legally qualified to advocate internationally what it is incapable of doing in its own country”. It ended by saying that “We Hondurans do not feel honourable about a deal that accepts access to the supposed benefits of the Millennium Account in exchange for censuring Cuba”.⁷

In a press release, the Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (ASONOG) stated: “the Honduran State has no moral authority to say anything at all about human rights” and that Honduras “has no proof that there are human rights violations in Cuba”. The press release ended by saying: “all we are doing is obeying a dishonest request from the most powerful state in the world that goes against morality and ethics”.⁸

The Fraternal Black Honduran Organisation (OFRANEH) said “it is ironic that Honduras, where there is not even the slightest respect for the human rights of the indigenous and black people or those of the population in general feels itself entitled to sponsor an international resolution against Cuba”. It considered that Honduras had done what it did following “the USA’s line”.⁹

More than 600 Honduran students at the Latin American Medical School in Cuba — where around 10,000 young poor afro-American and afro-Latin-American and indigenous students are studying to be doctors free of charge— condemned the action that had Mr. Maduro say, “yes Sir, yes Sir!” to the orders of the restless, brutal North as “servile and embarrassing”. They added “this action betrays the Honduran people, selling the peoples’ dignity for a few dollars more”.¹⁰

The National Board of Directors of the Honduras – Cuba Association (AHC) protested because “President Maduro, as a faithful servant of Bush’s interventionist policies, has assumed the dishonourable role of accuser”. It added that “we do not agree with the policy of our country’s government” for, as they said, “as well as being amoral behaviour, it does not reflect the thoughts and feelings of the Honduran people, being obviously and expressly an off-shoot of the Bush government’s foreign policy”.¹¹

The Honduran National Commissioner on Human Rights Ramón Custodio raised his voice in the name of the Honduran people during the debates of the Commission on Human Rights 60th period of sessions to condemn the attitude of his government and to dissociate the people of his country from such loathsome anti-Cuban manoeuvre.

The United States failed once again in its efforts to change the discredited image of its anti-Cuban behaviour on the Commission on Human Rights. The illegitimate motivation behind this manoeuvre and the pressure and blackmail directly applied by the Superpower to have it unfairly passed cannot be hidden.

No matter how many times they repeat it, there is no credibility to Washington’s hackneyed thesis that their anti-Cuban behaviour in Geneva should be seen as completely separate from any attempt to invent a pretext for the continuance of its hostile blockade policy against Cuba. Facts show just the opposite.

Only a few days after the Commission on Human Rights 60th period of sessions ended, on 6 May 2004 to be precise, President Bush announced the implementation of new measures aimed at stepping up the blockade and at destroying the constitutional order sovereignly chosen by the Cuban people in a referendum.

Since the Bush administration came to power with the enthusiastic support of the most extreme elements in Miami, the United States has been carrying out new attacks and implementing more measures to artificially create a crisis situation in Cuba which would give them a pretext to intervene

⁷ Tiempo Newspaper, 3 April 2004. www.granma.cubaweb.cu/secciones/cdh60/

⁸ Tiempo Newspaper, 3 April 2004. La Tribuna, 4 April 2004.

⁹ Tiempo Newspaper, 5 April 2004.

¹⁰ Granma Newspaper, Havana, 3 April 2004.

¹¹ La Prensa Newspaper, printed by Granma Newspaper, 6 April 2004

militarily in the island. They're convinced that only direct, large-scale armed intervention can stop the process of revolutionary transformations undertaken by and with the unwavering support of the overwhelming majority of the Cuban people who are committed to defending this process.

The first chapter of the report drafted by the commission created by President Bush to hasten the so-called "regime change" in Cuba, published 6 May, identifies two tasks directly connected to the Commission on Human Rights: the organisation of a broad disinformation campaign abroad and encouragement for the international isolation of the Revolution with efforts involving other actors and manipulating spaces offered by multilateral organisations.

The executive summary of the same chapter of the document that President Bush made his own says, with no beating around the bush, that fomenting anti-Cuban manoeuvrings in international organisations was an especially important tool for contributing to the policy of hastening the end of the Castro regime. It specifically recommended "increasing support for human rights monitoring".

It should come as no surprise, therefore, that, as part of the growing anti-Cuban aggressiveness of the imperialist forces that control the Bush administration, the manoeuvres against that symbol of resistance and social justice that is the Cuban Revolution have gone beyond the stage of the Commission on Human Rights to other theatres, such as the International Labour Organisation.

Cuba has also been included on every list cooked up by the State Department in order to discredit those countries that do not submit to its schemes of hegemonic world domination. Never mind that the Cuban people has been a victim for more than forty years of terrorist actions by groups that act with impunity from US soil, Cuba is always identified in the State Department's list as a state that collaborates with terrorism. Neither does the State Department pay any mind to the United States authorities' encouragement of and failure to punish the illegal traffic in Cubans perpetrated by criminals living in Florida. Cuba never fails to appear on the list of countries that do not collaborate in the control of trafficking in persons.

The typical pattern used to design the United States' hostile anti-Cuban policy is lying, which allows it to hypocritically and opportunistically transfer the blame for its own acts to Cuba and other countries. If it is shown that the United States is the principal source of sex tourism clients—which is a fact—Washington will automatically cook up false allegations saying that Cuba is the "main destination for sex tourism".

To all of the foregoing is added the fact that the United States has, on several occasions, rejected Cuban proposals to sign cooperation agreements on a joint attack on terrorism, drug trafficking and traffic in persons.

The US government is allocating an additional \$ 5,000,000 to financing its anti-Cuban public diplomacy initiatives. This is added to other million dollar sums from US public and intelligence budgets that allow them to "buy supporters" and "reward allies" in what Washington has taken to calling "an international solidarity campaign" with the "cause" of a "democratic transition" in Cuba¹².

Lavish anti-Cuban spectacles have been staged in Prague and other European cities with this money, paying for the salaries, air tickets, rooms in luxury hotels and high per diems of superannuated politicians, petty chieftains of the Cuban-born terrorist mob, agents and collaborators of the Central Intelligence Agency and just about any crook willing to support the imperialist crusade against the Cuban nation.

The Bush administration's basic aim is to project the image that the Cuban government deprives its citizens of the most elementary rights and functions on the margins of international law—calling it a

¹² A detailed breakdown of these entries, used to recruit and sustain the activities of anti-Cuban groups can be found in the Second Part of this text, titled "The redoubling of the Bush administration's hostile aggressive policy towards the Cuban people: serious threat to the Cuban people's human rights."; particularly in the chapter called "The United States steps up its recruitment, financing and use of mercenaries in its attempt to undermine the Cuban people's self-determination".

“rogue state”— thus creating false perceptions that can be used as a pretext for escalating its hostile policy of blockade and aggression towards the Cuban people.

A mere 48 hours had gone by since President Bush’s re-election, when the aggressive and militaristic clique whose power had been given a surprising boost in the recently held imperial elections rushed to make sure that its hostile blockade policy towards Cuba would suffer no changes.

On 4 November 2004, the State Department issued a press notice entitled: “Cuba: Human Rights Situation”, which repeated several of the lies, slanders and false accusations that have been the basis of the anti-Cuban campaign waged by the United States over human rights issues.¹³

The imperial press notice once again uses a distorted version of what happened in March 2003, when the Cuban government and courts found themselves obliged to act and apply the law to neutralize the criminal act of mercenaries who —paid and controlled by the US Interests Section in Havana— attempted to destroy the Cuban people’s chosen constitutional order. Washington’s anti-Cuban edict described this end to impunity for those who break the law as a “sweeping crackdown on independent civil society activists”.

The State Department told barefaced lies once again. By virtue of laws which existed before the crimes were committed, the ordinary Cuban civil courts sentenced not activists, much less independent, men and women but annexationist mercenaries who accepted orders and generous salaries from the United States government and perpetrated illegal acts inside Cuba to foster the Superpower’s policy of blockade and aggression towards our homeland. Conspiring with a foreign power is a crime in any country in the world, including the United States.

Lying —perhaps equalled only by its pride, arrogance, aggressive attitude and contempt for law, the interests and the aspirations of other people — will be the identifying characteristic that will make this current neo-fascist US administration go down in history. And by the way, haven’t Saddam Hussein’s dangerous arsenals of arms of mass destruction turned up yet?

The United States government has not the slightest moral right to accuse Cuba of anything. The outrageous, ruthless behaviour of the present US administration has been responsible for some of the most serious, large-scale human rights violations in the whole history of humanity. This has been aggravated by the fact that it has trampled on and made a dead letter of a significant part of one of the most important advances of the international community in the sphere of international law, particularly human rights and international humanitarian law.

Using false pretexts, the Empire’s military forces have killed more than 100, 000 Iraqi civilians, whose numbers include a high proportion of women and children. The dimensions of the human tragedy in Iraq and the extensive use of torture, extrajudicial executions and collective punishment on the civil population has led many to call this war of imperial conquest nothing other than genocide.

In territory illegally occupied by the US naval base on Guantanamo Bay, more than 600 human beings have been arbitrary imprisoned for more than three years in inhuman conditions. No charges have ever been laid against them nor have they been brought to trial

It is the United States, which, through the imposition of a cruel inhuman and genocidal blockade, has violated the human rights of the whole Cuban population for a period of more than 40 years.

It is the US administration which, flagrantly violating the principles of international law, conjures up, teaches and finances groupings of unscrupulous, annexation-inclined mercenaries so that, under the guidance of its Interests Section in Havana they may undertake actions aimed at destroying the Republic of Cuba’s constitutional order.

¹³ See the Statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba dated 5 November 2004 and published in Granma, the Official Organ of the Communist Party of Cuba, on 6 November 2004.

It is the US administration that violates the human rights of millions of US citizens by forbidding them to travel to Cuba.

Cuba, as an example of social justice, true democracy and respect for human rights is a thorn in the side of President Bush and his closest associates from the anti-Cuban mob. By dint of its sacrifice, talent and steadfastness the Cuban people has built a viable political, economic and social alternative, which is the complete opposite of the ideals of world domination and unilateral hegemony, which those currently controlling the United States government are trying to install worldwide. They fear what the Cuban Revolution has accomplished and for that reason all they can do is lie.

The US administration has already started its work of pressure and “commitment getting” with the intention of keeping its anti-Cuban manoeuvre in Geneva alive. They are worried in Washington about the significant drop in effectiveness suffered by this kind of action against developing and other countries that are opposed to its patterns of domination.

Its anti-Cuban strategy includes several lines of action. One of them, of a rather general nature — and perhaps the most dangerous since its tactics are focussed around confrontation, exclusion and political manipulation — is the initiative of the so-called “Community of Democracies”.

What is this farce called “Community of Democracies”?

Once it plans to manipulate the New and Restored Democracies Movement as a tool for aggression, condemnation and domination failed — because of the concerted action of Southern countries and some Northern governments which understood the danger arising from sacrificing international cooperation aimed at consolidating democracy to extremely petty political motivations— the United States decided to cook up a new mechanism which serves its imperial needs.

So it created the “Community of Democracies” at a meeting in Warsaw organised, directed and financed by the United States. The so-called community has no universality, legitimacy or credibility but does have, yes indeed, a great deal of money donated by Washington and access to the dirty practices developed at the height of the Cold War.

The government of the Empire hopes to achieve various aims by manipulating this “community” which Washington oversees and controls using mechanisms that are far from democratic.

- Ensure it has a permanent presence on bodies like the CHR and thus avoid having to submit itself to periodic elections and eliminating any danger that its might once again have to go through the bitter and humiliating experience of being excluded from membership on the Commission on Human Rights.
- Controlling the membership of “bodies useful” for condemning governments and for imposing its ideological patterns — focussing particularly on the Commission on Human Rights— offering membership to countries vulnerable to its pressure and threatening to block the access to those who oppose its policies of hegemonic domination.
- Inventing and imposing false consensus that, ideologically, complements and consolidates its unquestionable military hegemony.

Over the last few months it has been common to see the ambassador of the Superpower at the Economic and Social Council or even Mrs Dobriansky herself either in New York or Geneva or the Middle East proselytising for her anti-democratic sect which they have euphemistically christened “Community of Democracies” and urging that the door of the CHR be closed to countries which are not in agreement with its aspirations to world domination. One of them, there, with a seat in the first row, is Cuba.

Another more direct line of action against Cuba is the pressure applied: by US ambassadors in various capitals, by the State Department on ambassadors serving in Washington and by the White House on various high level delegations which visit the United States. We have information about

this, but for obvious reasons of discretion and opportunity, the details will not be released until it is appropriate to do so.

Which government will succumb in 2005 to Washington's pressure and accept the ignominious task of publicly tabling the draft anti-Cuban resolution, which the United States insists, is adopted in the CHR? There are not, in fact, many potential candidates and everybody knows that the actual author and sponsor are labelled "Made in USA".

Those governments which agree to cosponsor and support the anti-Cuban resolution in Geneva will be accomplices of the imperialist plan which the Bush administration is implementing, the aim of which is to destroy by any means necessary —direct military intervention is not ruled out— the social, economic and political system freely chosen by the Cuban people. These governments will be contributing to cooking up a pretext Washington can use to step up its policy of blockade hostility and aggression towards the Cuban people.

CHAPTER 2: THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL PROCESSES OF THE UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS MACHINERY HAVE BEEN HIJACKED BY THE UNITED STATES AND ITS CLOSE ALLIES TO USE AS TOOLS FOR APPLYING PRESSURE TO IMPOSE THEIR POLICIES OF GLOBAL DOMINATIO.

Nearly six decades after the Universal Declaration on Human Rights was adopted and twelve years after the World Conference on Human Rights was held in Vienna, the United Nations machinery demonstrates —time and time again— that it is incapable of promoting and protecting all human rights for everyone, on the basis of respect for and adherence to the principles of universality, impartiality, objectivity and non-discrimination.

The work of the Commission on Human Rights is bogged down by the political manipulation of a small group of powerful nations, most particularly by that of the world hegemonic superpower. This handful of rich countries regards the Commission as its own private property and makes ill use of it, as an instrument to jeopardise the interests of underdeveloped countries, which represent the immense majority of UN members, and to impose certain, supposedly universal norms and the *pensée unique* upon them.

The Commission on Human Rights and the General Assembly's Third Commission have become a kind of court of the inquisition trying South countries and all who oppose the empire's strategy of political and ideological domination. These mechanisms relentlessly and dogmatically attempt to impose schemes and models touted as universal on these countries, try to minimize the protection and promotion of economic, social and cultural rights and aim to deny the recognition of and protection for the right of peoples to peace, development and self-determination.

Manipulation, lies, double standards and empty rhetoric prevail, while people close their eyes to realities we face every day, even if many attempt to conceal them or, simply, remain blind to them.

It is hard to reconcile Article 1 of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, which proclaims that "all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights" with the fact that the 4,500,000,000 human beings who live in underdeveloped countries consume only 14 % of total world production, while the 1,500,000,000 who live in developed countries consume the remaining 86 %; and 20 % of the world's richest population possesses 82 times the wealth of the poorest 20 %.

The noble goals and lofty attributes that the Universal Declaration recognizes in every human being are nothing but a dead letter for the nearly one thousand million people who go hungry, 160,000,000 malnourished children among them; for the three fifths of the population of underdeveloped countries who live in unsanitary conditions; for the one third of these 4,500,000,000 people who have no access to drinking water; for the one quarter of these human beings who are homeless and the one fifth who have no basic medical services.

Thirty thousand children under 5 die every day and six hundred thousand women die in labour each year, while more than 20,000,000 people infected with the AIDS virus await death in Africa, with no hope of receiving treatment – one of the most heartrending denials of the right to life.

The resolutions adopted in UN organizations mean nothing to the 850,000,000 illiterate adults who are unable to write or even read the word "right" and for the 260,000,000 children of school age who receive no education.

The Commission on Human Rights devotes neither the efforts nor the resources needed to promote the right to development, a fundamental human right which was recognized at the Vienna Conference and the only way to pull the wretched of the earth — who don't see the use of resolutions approved in Geneva and New York— out of misery and hunger.

Many are still waiting for the Commission on Human Rights to designate a special rapporteur to follow up on and have industrialized countries honour their commitments with respect to Official Aid for Development and the cruel impact the reduction of such aid has had on human rights in underdeveloped countries.

The right to development, to life, to food, to work, to education, to health, the rights of women and children, in short, the right of all the planet's inhabitants, not only a privileged few, to a decent life and to fully enjoy long-overdue social justice, is today a priority for, and only for, poor and underdeveloped countries.

The Commission on Human Rights must be transformed into an instrument for all countries that protects all human rights. The Commission on Human Rights belongs to all peoples and not just to some.

All country-specific resolutions adopted since 1990 accusingly point their finger at underdeveloped nations, as though they were truly the ones encroaching on human rights; all were put forth by developed countries. No one could objectively question the fact that a minority of countries has been imposing its biases and points of views on decisions, which are internationally adopted on human rights issues.

In the attached table, we can appreciate how every resolution adopted in the course of a decade under item 9 of the Commission's agenda, established to look into serious human rights violations in "any part of the world", or in relation to item 19, designed to promote advisory services and technical cooperation for human rights issues, singles out developing countries.

The Commission approves twice as many resolutions on civil and political rights as it does resolutions on economic, social and cultural rights. Three times as many pages in official documents are devoted to civil and political rights as they are to economic, social and cultural rights. The reason is well known: it is in the interests of developed countries that the Commission only deal with civil and political rights.

Each year, a handful of developed countries accredit more delegates to work in the Commission on Human rights than do all underdeveloped countries—which represent more than 75 % of the world's population— together. As a direct consequence of this unjust imbalance, developed countries propose more than 65 % of all resolutions and decisions adopted in each period of sessions, something that does irremediable harm to the respect for diversity proclaimed in the Declaration and the Vienna Action Plan.

The work of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights is crucial in the preparations for sessions and in following up on the Commission's decisions. However, the reports presented to the Commission are written — and nearly all of the work of the latter is performed— by officials from industrialized countries who foist upon it their models, culture, ideology and the concrete historical experience of those who have benefited from an unjust world order which ostracizes the great majority of human beings, whose lot was to be born in the South, and does not allow their talent and their initiative to flourish.

Western Europe, the United States and Canada have more staff in the Office of the High Commissioner than all underdeveloped countries together. Human rights are universal, but officials from countries with a per capita Gross Domestic Product which exceeds twenty thousand dollars are not likely to understand these rights as do officials from countries whose per capita GDP does not exceed three hundred dollars. This contradiction becomes, more and more, an insurmountable challenge, and poor nations watch impotently as their intellectuals and professionals swarm to rich countries hoping for better opportunities and chasing impossible dreams.

No one in their right mind could say that no human rights violations take place in developed countries; it is impossible, however, to discuss these violations in the Commission.

The hands of the Commission on Human Rights are tied as a result of the pressures that some North governments bring to bear on its members. This body, for instance, has not been able review or even to discuss the serious violations by US authorities of the human rights of prisoners, both in the territory illegally occupied by its military base in Guantanamo Bay and in the Abu Ghraib prison and others in occupied Iraq.

The inability of the UN's human rights machinery to remedy large-scale, flagrant human rights violations when the violators are citizens of the superpower or of its main allies. The impunity of the powerful.

On 26 March 2003, during the 59th session of the Commission on Human Rights, there was a proposal to call a special and urgent session to examine the effects had by the war waged by the United States and its closest allies on the Iraqi population.

As known, this imperialist war had started a week before, in violation of the most elementary precepts of international law, a show of outright contempt for the will of the international community and the authority of the United Nations, of its Security Council particularly, justified by the grossest of pretexts and lies.

The proposal to hold a debate on the matter was backed by Algeria, Burkina Faso, the Russian Federation, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, the Arab Republic of Syria, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan and Zimbabwe; it was submitted for the Commission's consideration during discussions on agenda item 3, entitled: "Organisation of the work of the session".

The request made no attempt to influence the focus and outcome of the debate. It merely asked the Commission to consider and urgently attend to the effects of the war on the Iraqi people.

The United States and its allies were quick to react. On behalf of the Group of Western European and other States, Germany turned down the proposal and presented a procedural motion to postpone the debate for 24 hours, invoking the Economic and Social Council Organic Commissions' rules.

The following day, the Syrian Arab Republic, on behalf of the proposal's co-authors, proceeded to revise it. It requested that the proposal be taken up under agenda item 4 "Report of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and follow-up to the World Conference on Human Rights", and orally changed title to the following: "Special Sitting of the 59th session of the Commission on Human Rights on the human rights and humanitarian situation in Iraq as a result of the war".

Numerous members of the Group of Western European and other States — of which the United States is member— refused to countenance the proposal, defending their position with the most varied, indefensible and shameless pretexts.

The proposal was defeated with 25 votes against. Those voting against were the United States, all European Union member countries and their associates, a number of Latin American countries whose governments were dragged into the imperialist adventure and some others who succumbed under pressure from the aggressor.

While smart bombs killed and mutilated thousands of innocent civilians and destroyed irreplaceable works of Iraq's and the world's cultural heritage, the Commission on Human Rights was gagged and forced to maintain scandalous and cowardly silence.

In a display of hypocrisy, the European Union subsequently presented its traditional draft resolution on the situation of human rights in Iraq under item nine of the Commission's agenda, requesting that the special rapporteur present a report to the Commission's next period of sessions analysing only those human rights violations which were committed prior to the military invasion, as though the history of a Iraq had come to a standstill that same day. Not one bit of space devoted to monitoring the acts of the empire's legionaries!

The script the Commission was obliged to follow stopped the clock in Iraq on that day in March 2003 when the first American missiles dropped on its territory. The casualties of an imperialist war that has taken away the lives of tens of thousands of innocent civilians and the brutal torture of prisoners by US occupation forces which has shocked world public opinion are topics on which discussion has been banned in the CHR.

The impunity of the United States was confirmed during the 60th period of sessions of the Commission on Human Rights. So there was not even a single allusion to the crimes of the occupiers, a cynical card was played: for the first time in many years, the European Union “abstained” from submitting a draft resolution on the human rights situation in Iraq. Suddenly, all interest on the matter vanished.

Another manoeuvre which unmasked the hypocrisy and the double standards which characterize the work of the United States and its allies in the Commission on Human Rights also took place during the 60th period of sessions, on April 2004, when Cuba presented the initiative titled “Questions of arbitrary detentions in the area of the US Naval Base in Guantanamo”.

The resolution could not be voted on because of the manoeuvres of the European Union and some Latin American governments who acted in complicity with Washington authorities.

The European Union, which time and time again has claimed to be against no-action motions in the field of human rights, expressed its decision, on this occasion, to resort to a procedural manoeuvre against the Cuban proposal which would not only have prevented the Commission from taking any action on it but would also and even have censured and prevented its discussion and consideration altogether.

All of this took place despite the fact that, only a few weeks earlier, the European Parliament had requested its president to have European countries sponsor, in the aforementioned period of sessions, a draft resolution asking the United States to immediately clarify the humanitarian and human rights situation of prisoners in Guantanamo and, consequently, to proceed to the immediate trial or release of the prisoners. The European Parliament also repeated its request that the United Nations create an independent monitoring mechanism for this case.

EU governments not only refused to lead this initiative but also impeded others from doing what they should have done. Once again, they closed their eyes so as not to see and helped the US cloak in secrecy the serious human rights violations perpetrated by US authorities against hundreds of people imprisoned under concentration-camp-like conditions, in the illegal US Naval Base in Guantanamo.

Months later, on the occasion of the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council which took place in New York in the summer of 2004, draft resolution L.17 Rev. 1, titled “Question of the protection of human rights and fundamental liberties in the context of international military operations undertaken to combat terrorism”**, was submitted to this important UN body. The L.17 Rev.1 draft resolution was proposed by the Cuban delegation as a continuation of the work began at the 60th period of sessions of the Commission on Human Rights.

On this new occasion, the draft resolution presented by Cuba had a novel title, content and approach; it did not attribute responsibility to any specific country and was strictly thematic in nature. In fact, most of the paragraphs contained in the draft had been written using standard language and, what is important, were based on texts published by current international instruments dealing with this field.

Unfortunately, European Union countries, the rest of Western industrialized countries and for others that cannot hold out against the pressure of the hegemonic superpower by adhering to truth and justice, did not care that the contents of the new initiative were unquestionable from the point of view of law, necessity and ethics.

The fact this draft resolution was a concrete response to repeated and urgent calls for action — sparked off by aberrant human rights violations committed during international military operations supposedly undertaken to combat terrorism— voiced by important world figures, non-governmental organisations, CHR mechanisms, organizations created by virtue of international human rights treaties and world public opinion, in no way altered the position adopted by these governments.

Suffice it to mention the Joint Communiqué drafted at the Eleventh Annual Meeting of the special mechanisms of the Commission on Human Rights, issued on 25 June 2004, through which four representatives of the CHR's special mechanisms made a request to travel to facilities where individuals with supposed ties to terrorist activity are held, in Iraq, Afghanistan and the US Naval Base in Guantanamo.

Once again, far from joining in and contributing to the negotiation efforts of the Cuban delegation, the great human rights “champions” —the industrialized powers of the North— fabricated an arsenal of pretexts and false arguments to preserve the immunity of those responsible for torture, forced disappearances, extra-legal executions, arbitrary arrests and other serious human rights violations, perpetrated during international military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The US delegation asked for a vote on the draft resolution at the Economic and Social Council; the resolution was turned down with 24 votes against, 12 in favour and 17 abstentions. The fact this resolution could not be adopted cannot, however, be attributed solely to the strong pressure exerted by US embassies in different parts of the world. A decisive role was also played by the conniving support and activism of the European Union and other developed countries, which hoped to maintain impunity for the brutal human rights violations of its strategic ally.

Not yielding to American pressure, the immense majority of South countries voted in favour of adopting draft resolution L.17 Rev.1 or, at least, abstained from voting. In fact, 30 of the 54 members of the Council did not back Washington's express request to vote against the Cuban initiative. The reservoir of strength and spirit of resistance our peoples call on to defend human dignity, truth and justice were once again evident.

Those who prevented UN human rights mechanisms from investigating and effectively responding to cases of human rights violations, such as the well documented sexual abuse of Iraqi prisoners by US occupation forces, are those who are always ready to guarantee Washington's impunity. They are the same people who, every year, submit and co-sponsor unjust draft resolutions that condemn various South countries in the Commission on Human Rights, including the futile and spurious anti-Cuba farce directed by the United States.

Once again, the so-called international system for the promotion and protection of human rights showed itself incapable of functioning objectively, impartially and in a non-discriminatory manner.

The Commission on Human Rights, the Economic and Social Council, the General Assembly and all other UN agencies that attend to human rights have been hijacked and transformed into mere instruments serving the great powers' lust for domination, something that has become especially evident in the political manipulation of their work by the current US administration.

Pressure, threats, conditions and even blackmail continue to be the “arguments” chosen by the United States and its staunchest allies to justify their continued use of these organizations as veritable courts for condemning those who dissent, resist and fight against the plans of world domination hatched in transnational capital's power centres.

However, many are those who question this state of things and do not resign themselves to its perpetuation. The report submitted by the “High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change”, which was set up on the initiative of the UN General Secretary (See Document A/59/565), clearly questions the “least credibility” status to which the Commission on Human Rights has been led, categorically stating that the “The Commission cannot be credible if it is seen to be maintaining double standards in addressing human rights concerns”.

A number of special mechanisms in the Commission have not joined in the conniving silence that North powers insist on with respect to the serious human rights violations committed by the Superpower and the latter's essential questioning of basic international human rights principles and precepts and international humanitarian law.

The presidents of the Commission on Human Rights' working groups on Arbitrary Arrests and Enforced and Involuntary Disappearances, the special rapporteurs on torture, [the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health](#), on the independence of judges and lawyers and the independent expert on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan have just submitted a report expressing serious concerns about the situation of those detained in Guantanamo on charges of terrorism.

The report points out that many of the prisoners have been held virtually incommunicado for nearly three years, without legal counsel or information about the possible duration of their confinement, in conditions, which, according to numerous witnesses, are tantamount to inhuman and degrading treatment.

The experts pointed out that the recent measures taken by the United States, such as the release of some prisoners, and the Supreme Court's ruling on the right to habeas corpus, do not dispel the serious concerns about the need to objectively evaluate reports of torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment, particularly those used in the interrogation of prisoners.

That the exact number or names of prisoners are still unknown and that prisoners are often unofficially and secretly transferred to other detention centres under the jurisdiction of the United States and other countries is labelled extremely disquieting.

Doubt was also expressed whether the preliminary hearings were free from interference or the proceedings just, including eventual courts martial where the accused had no access to legal counsel or to most of the evidence presented against them.

They concluded by stating that prison conditions, especially those of solitary confinement, exposed prisoners to a high risk of psychological harm and, possibly, to the development of irreversible psychiatric conditions.

With so many thematic mechanisms of the Commission on Human Rights having painted such a disquieting portrait of serious violations, one would expect that an Extraordinary Session of the Commission be called to analyse the situation in the US Naval Base in Guantanamo and that, under no circumstances, should such a matter remain ignored by the organization's intergovernmental decisions.

At least, this is what would have happened had the violator been an African, Asian, Arab or Latin American country. In that case, the United States and European Union would doubtless have been the first to demand immediate sanctions and to invoke a supposed "right to humanitarian intervention".

Aware that, in the international campaign it wages in the battlefield of ideas, it is representing the interests and hopes of freedom, independence, justice and well-being of all the world's peoples, Cuba will continue to table new initiatives at United Nations fora on human rights to directly confront the hypocrisy, cynicism and opportunism which continues to guide the actions of a majority of North governments within these organizations.

Cuba shall not yield in its struggle to make these institutions true defenders of the noble cause of and hopes for justice, development, equality, peace and solidarity, things dearly needed by the vast majority of peoples, who still do not even know that they have rights.

APPENDIX: Tables with country-specific resolutions adopted by the Commission on Human Rights in the period between 1995 and 2004 having to do with the agenda items: "Situations of Persistent Violations of Human Rights And Fundamental Liberties In Any Part Of The World" (Item 9) and Advice And Technical Cooperation Services In Human Rights Matters" (Item 19)

Resolutions Item 9	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998	1997	1996	1995
1. Situation of human rights in the People's Democratic Republic of Korea.	X	X								
2. Situation of human rights in Turkmenistan	X	X								
3. Situation of human rights in Myanmar	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
4. Situation of human rights in Cuba	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
5. Situation of human rights in Byelorussia	X	X								
6. Situation of human rights in the Democratic Republic of the Congo ¹⁴		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
7. Situation of human rights in Burundi		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
8. Situation of human rights of Lebanese prisoners in Israel		X	X	X						
9. Situation of human rights in South Lebanon and West Bekaa					X	X	X	X	X	X
10. Situation of human rights in Iraq		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
11. Assistance to Equatorial Guinea in the field of human rights.			X	X					X	
12. Situation of human rights in and human rights aid to Equatorial Guinea					X	X	X	X		
13. Situation of human rights in some parts of south-eastern Europe			X	X						
14. Situation of human rights in Sudan			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
15. Situation of human rights in Afghanistan			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
16. Situation of human rights in Sierra Leone			X	X	X					
17. Situation of human rights in Rwanda			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
18. Situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran				X	X	X	X	X	X	X
19. Situation of human rights in the Republic of Chechnya, Russian Federation				X	X					
20. Situation of human rights in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), the Republics of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina ¹⁵					X	X	X	X	X	X
21. Situation of human rights in Kosovo						X				
22. Situation of human rights in Sierra Leone						X				
23. Situation of human rights in Nigeria						X	X	X	X	

¹⁴ Until 1996, the resolution referred to Zaire.

¹⁵ Prior to 2000, the title was: Situation of human rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Croatia and the Federative Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

Resolutions Item 9	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998	1997	1996	1995
24. Situation of human rights in East Timor								X		
25. Situation of human rights in Togo									X	
26. Human rights violations in Bougainville Island, Papua, New Guinea										X
27. Situation of human rights in Haiti										X

Resolutions Item 19	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998	1997	1996	1995
1. Assistance to Somalia in the field of human rights	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
2. Situation of human rights in Burundi	x									
3. Advisory services and technical cooperation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo	x									
4. Advisory services and technical cooperation in Chad	x	x								
5. Assistance to Sierra Leone in the field of human rights	x									
6. Situation of human rights in Sierra Leone		x								
7. Advisory services and technical cooperation in Cambodia	x									
8. Situation of human rights in Cambodia		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
9. Advisory services and technical cooperation in Liberia	x	x								
10. Situation of human rights in Afghanistan		x								
11. Situation of human rights in Haiti		x			x	x	x	x	x	
12. Assistance to Guatemala in the field of human rights							x	x	x	x
13. Advisory services to El Salvador in the field of human rights										x
14. Situation of human rights in Togo										x

CHAPTER 3: IN SPITE OF THE UNFAIR ANTI-CUBAN MANOEUVRE IMPOSED ON THE CHR, CUBA CONTINUES TO HONOUR ITS COMMITMENT TO COOPERATE WITH ALL NON-DISCRIMINATORY MECHANISMS IN HUMAN RIGHTS MATTERS.

Cuba has a long and dignified history in the sphere of international cooperation in human rights matters. This history, however, has been suppressed and, what is worse, distorted by the hegemonic superpower's propaganda machine.

Through concrete actions, Cuba has always demonstrated an unequivocal willingness to engage in frank and open dialogue on the basis of mutual respect on all topics, including that of human rights.

In spite of our principled opposition to the selective, discriminatory and unfair treatment the United States advocates against Cuba in matters concerning human rights, Cuba has continued with its traditional cooperation with any mechanisms in this area that are applied in a universal and non-discriminatory way.

As an example of this; in 1988, at the invitation of the Cuban government, a mission headed by the president of the Commission on Human Rights and made up of five other members of that organisation came to Cuba in order to observe the human rights situation in our country and to report back to the Commission. This offer was included in the decision 1988/106, adopted by the Commission on Human Rights.

The visit took place from 16 to 25 September of that same year and the Cuban government provided it with every amenity and guarantee to undertake both the preparatory work and the actual work in our country. The mission's report acknowledged the positive attitude and good will shown by Cuban authorities and clearly stated that there did not exist a human rights situation in Cuba which would in any way justify a special follow-up process.

The following year (1989) and because of Commission decision 1989/113, Cuba clearly expressed its willingness to continue cooperating with the United Nations Secretary General in following up on the recommendations included in the mission's report. This process was interrupted, however, by the United States' decision to manipulate it for the purpose of anti-Cuban propaganda by forcing an unfair resolution condemning Cuba through the Commission, a resolution that has been foisted upon the Commission every session since 1990.

The US' unjust confrontational manoeuvre against and unfounded condemnation of Cuba met with an honourable and principled response from the Cuban people. Cuba does not yield to pressure, coercion or blackmail. It will never recognize nor cooperate with an anti-Cuban manoeuvre like the one led by the United States in the CHR – clearly illegitimate, illegal and unjust in its conception, motivations and methods.

This non-negotiable determination notwithstanding, Cuba continued to cooperate with the Commission on Human Rights and other human rights bodies of the United Nations system, availing itself of the broad range of opportunities offered by the numerous mechanisms, bodies and organizations which are non-selective and adhere to a universal standard in their work.

The invitation extended to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to visit Cuba in 1994 was another step taken by Cuba to foster international cooperation in the sphere of human rights.

Cuba was one of the first countries to receive a High Commissioner, Mr. José Ayala Lasso, in 1994, only a few months after this position was created in the UN structure.

As part of the extensive program prepared for his visit, the High Commissioner met with various government representatives and other actors and visited numerous centres of interest, where he was able to speak freely with many Cubans. At the end of his tour through Cuba, the then High Commissioner emphasized the receptiveness of the Cuban government and its willingness to follow the main suggestions made during his visit.

In 1995, the Cuban government invited a delegation of international non-governmental organizations to visit our country. This visit took place from 28 April to 5 May that year. The mission was made up of the organizations France Libertés, the International Federation of Human Rights Leagues, World Doctors and Human Rights Watch.

While carrying out their work in Cuba, the representatives of these organizations were given all possible support by the Cuban authorities and managed to meet all the goals they had set themselves including visits to several jails and meetings with prisoners in whom they were interested.

In 1998, when the anti-Cuban draft resolution wanted by the United States was defeated, Cuba extended invitations to the Commission's special rapporteurs on the use of mercenaries and violence against women to visit the country, visits which took place in 1999.

In addition to welcoming missions to the country, Cuba has cooperated intensively with UN human rights mechanisms in other ways and methods. One way Cuban authorities have been unfailingly

cooperating in this sphere at the international level has been by systematically providing information to universal and non-discriminatory CHR mechanisms and to organisations created by virtue of international human rights treaties.

In keeping with its historical commitment to cooperate with and be an active member of the Commission, the Cuban government has responded to requests for information about alleged violations of human rights which have been sent to it through the different procedures and mechanisms of the Commission and the mechanism set in place by Social, Economic and Social Council's resolution 1503.

In 2004, after consulting with the competent authorities, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent information regarding twelve alleged cases of human rights violations to the Commission's special rapporteurs on freedom of opinion and expression, torture and health and to the special representative of human rights defenders.

Cuba has conveyed the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights its points of view and feedback and has responded to a significant number of information requests arising from thematic resolutions adopted by the Commission on Human Rights.

In keeping with the importance Cuba attaches to cooperating with non-discriminatory mechanisms of the Commission on Human Rights, 28 thematic replies were sent to the human rights secretariat in Geneva in 2004 alone.

Cuba has honoured its commitment, as few countries have done, to submit regular reports to organizations established by virtue of international human rights treaties.

Recently, Cuba submitted both its fifth and sixth regular reports to the Committee for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Within the next twelve months, it will also submit its reports to the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) and the Committee against Torture (CAT).

Our country has ratified a significant number of international instruments relating to human rights. Cuba is State party to 15 of the 26 treaties considered to be the most important in this area, namely.

- Convention On The Rights Of The Child
- Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children and Child Prostitution and Child Pornography.
- Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhumane or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
 - Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
 - Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide
 - Convention on the Non-Applicability of Statutory Limitations to War Crimes and Crimes against Humanity,
 - International Convention on The Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid
 - International Convention against Apartheid in Sports
 - Convention on the Political Rights of Women
 - Convention on the Nationality of Married Women

- Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage And Registration of Marriages
- 1926 Slavery Convention and the Protocol Amending the Convention on Slavery
- Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade and the Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery, signed in Geneva on 25 September 1926.
- Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of others

Cuba has likewise signed the following instruments:

- Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
- Optional Convention to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of Children in Armed Conflicts.

Cuba has ratified other instruments in the sphere of labour rights related to the topic of human rights:

- Convention concerning Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise (N. 87)
- Convention concerning the Application of the Principles of the Right to Organise and to Bargain Collectively (N.98)
- Convention concerning Protection and Facilities to be Afforded to Workers' Representatives in the Undertaking (N. 135)
- Convention concerning Protection of the Right to Organise and Procedures for Determining Conditions of Employment in the Public Service (N. 151).
- Convention concerning Employment Policy (N. 122).

Cuba is in the advance guard of states that have ratified the most ILO conventions.

Cuba reaffirms its commitment to the contents of international covenants on civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights which it assumed when the respective texts were adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. The rights protected by the aforementioned instruments are fully enshrined for each and every Cuban citizen in the Constitution and laws of our country. There are large number of state programs and policies aimed especially at protecting and promoting the aforementioned rights for Cubans.

Nevertheless, Cuba will not take on new international responsibilities in a climate of confrontation and politically motivated manipulation of international cooperation over human rights matters. Cuba is open to dialogue with all interested countries on a basis of mutual respect and has stuck to its course of bilateral cooperation in this area with those whose approach to dialogue is respectful and serious. In its own region, Latin America, Cuba has had periodic exchanges on various subjects, including human rights related matters.

Another example of Cuba's willingness to remain open to international cooperation in human rights matters while rejecting pressure and intrusions was the visit of various representatives of the diplomatic corps accredited in Havana to different penitentiaries in Cuba during October 2004.

During this visit, the diplomats were able to appreciate the characteristics of Cuba's penitentiary system and how the human rights of all prisoners are protected in practice, without any kind of discrimination.

The visitors conversed with prisoners and security officers and verified, first hand, the quality of the facilities and medical personnel who attend to prisoners and the satisfactory state of health of the latter. They were also able to appreciate the impact had by new educational, sport and cultural

programmes aimed at improving the process of re-educating and re-inserting all prisoners into Cuban society.

Whilst we reject the possibility of cooperating in implementing the anti-Cuban resolutions adopted by closed vote in the Commission –whose approval is possible only because of the enormous pressures brought to bear by the hegemonic hyper power– Cuba wishes to reaffirm its willingness to continue cooperating fully with all other mandates adopted by the Commission on Human Rights on non-selective, non-discriminatory grounds and in particular its willingness to implement the mandate presented to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights by virtue of resolution 48/41 of the United Nations General Assembly.

Cuba will redouble her efforts to improve the Commission's effectiveness and credibility.

As an underdeveloped country obviously committed to the cause of making real all human rights for all people, Cuba needs a strong, fair Commission which is capable of responding to the broadest range of expectations from the world's peoples and capable of confronting the unilateral actions of the superpower.

Our country will continue to promote the right to food, international solidarity, the establishment of an equitable and democratic international order in which all of the rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights can become a reality for all human beings and all nations; the right to development for all nations and individuals; the right of all nations to peace and international cultural cooperation which respects our rich heritage of diversity.

In the Commission's work, Cuban representatives will continue to raise the question of the impact of the foreign debt on Third World countries' enjoyment of human rights; will oppose the use of mercenaries as a means to constrain nations from exercising their right to self-determination and oppose the application of unilateral coercive measures.

Cuba will support initiatives aimed at protecting all human rights in accordance with principles of universality, indivisibility and interdependence. Furthermore, Cuba will defend the efforts of developing countries to promote the broad spectrum of economic, social and cultural rights.

Cuba will continue to hold an eminent position because of the number and quality of its contributions to the High Commissioner's requests for information and will continue to reply in a systematic way to communications sent through the Commission's mechanisms.

The Cuban government will never tolerate any attempt to single it out unfairly or to trample its people's right to self-determination; neither will it tolerate that the sovereign equality of the Cuban state, established by the will of the Cuban people, be ignored, in flagrant violation of international law.

To sum up, the Cuban government will remain true to its commitment to multilateralism in international relations, particularly in the field of human rights and this implies resolutely confronting any manoeuvre aimed at manipulation in order to attain hegemonic domination of the international system.

At the same time, Cuba will continue to be true to the teachings of its national hero, José Martí, who proclaimed that the "first law of the Republic must be the reverence paid to man's full dignity".

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